

Message Text

SECRET

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17

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TO USMISSION GENEVA

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T STATE 030330

EXDIS

EO 11652:GDS

TAGS: CSCE, PFOR, XG

SUBJECT: SOVIET COMMENT ON LEADERSHIP MATTERS

REF: A. GENEVA 0609, B. GENEVA 0403

FOR USDEL CSCE

1. DEPARTMENT INTERESTED IN COMMENTS BY KOVALEV AND OTHERS ON SOVIET CSCE DEL WHICH REFLECT CURRENT SPECULATION ON BREZHNEV'S POLITICAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH. SPECIFICALLY WE HAVE NOTED COMMENT THAT CSCE DOCUMENT WOULD BE SIGNED AT "CHIEF OF STATE" LEVEL (PARA 7, REFTEL A) AND ASSURANCE THAT SOVIET INTEREST IN THE CONFERENCE DID NOT RESULT FROM ONE MAN AND WOULD CONTINUE IN ANY CASE (PARA 3, REFTEL B).

2. WHILE KOVALEV'S "CHIEF OF STATE" REFERENCE IS UNPRECEDENTED (TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE), HE MAY HAVE SIMPLY BEEN STRESSING THE HIGH LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION DESIRED BY USSR FROM PARTICIPATING STATES IN GENERAL.

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IN PAST BREZHNEV HAS SIGNED AGREEMENTS ON BEHALF OF

CHIEF-OF-STATE AND HAS RECEIVED PROTOCOL TREATMENT DUE
LATTER ON HIS SUMMIT TRIPS ABROAD.

3. ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT WISH TO RAISE THIS WITH THE SOVIETS
AT THIS TIME, WE WOULD APPRECIATE DELEGATION'S COMMENTS
ON CONTEXT OF THESE REMARKS AND EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE.
INGERSOLL

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NNN

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